

In the claims:

1. (Original) A multi-layer metal gasket comprising:
at least one active layer, at least one shim layer, the active layer and shim layer having aligned combustion holes, the shim layer having annular portions surrounding the combustion holes and tab portions projecting radially outwardly from the annular portions, the annular portions underlying associated sealing beads of at least one of the active layers, the tab portions including a radially extending neck region supporting a set of lateral bend tabs at a radially outer end thereof projecting laterally outwardly of the neck region, said bend tabs projecting through an associated set of laterally spaced mounting windows formed in the at least one active layer and being bent back toward one another to secure the shim layer to the at least one active layer.

2. (Original) The gasket of claim 1 wherein said bend tabs extend transverse to said neck region.

3. (Original) The gasket of claim 1 wherein said at least one active layer includes a relief window lying along an axis of said neck region between said mounting windows.

4. (Currently Amended) The A multi-layer metal gasket of claim 3 comprising:
at least one active layer, at least one shim layer, the active layer and shim layer having aligned combustion holes, the shim layer having annular portions surrounding the combustion holes and tab portions projecting radially outwardly from the annular portions, the annular portions underlying associated sealing beads of at least one of the active layers, the tab portions including a radially extending neck region supporting a set of lateral bend tabs at a radially outer end thereof projecting laterally outwardly of the neck region, said bend tabs projecting through an associated set of laterally spaced mounting windows formed in the at least one active layer and being bent back toward one another to secure the shim layer to the at least one active layer, wherein said at least one active layer includes a relief window lying along an axis of said neck region between said mounting windows, and wherein said at least one active layer includes an overlapped region separating said relief window from each of said mounting windows.

5. (Original) The gasket of claim 4 wherein said bend tabs each included a clamping portion 42 folded over against said overlapped regions.

6. (Original) The gasket of claim 5 wherein said relief window is relatively greater in width than that of said neck portion.

7. (Original) The gasket of claim 5 wherein said relief window extends axially beyond said tab portions.

8. (Original) The gasket of claim 1 wherein there are at least two active layers.

9. (Original) The gasket of claim 8 wherein said shim is joined to only one of said active layers by said bend tabs.

10. (Original) The gasket of claim 1 wherein said sealing beads surround said combustion holes.

11. (Original) The gasket of claim 1 wherein said shim layer only partially overlaps said active layer.

12. (Currently Amended) The A multi-layer metal gasket of claim 1 comprising: at least one active layer, at least one shim layer, the active layer and shim layer having aligned combustion holes, the shim layer having annular portions surrounding the combustion holes and tab portions projecting radially outwardly from the annular portions, the annular portions underlying associated sealing beads of at least one of the active layers, the tab portions including a radially extending neck region supporting a set of lateral bend tabs at a radially outer end thereof projecting laterally outwardly of the neck region, said bend tabs projecting through an associated set of laterally spaced mounting windows formed in the at least one active layer and being bent back toward one another to secure the shim layer to the at least one active layer, wherein said neck region and said bend tabs together have a generally T-shaped configuration.

13. (Original) The gasket of claim 1 wherein said bend tabs are spaced from said annular portions.

14. (Original) The gasket of claim 1 wherein said bend tabs each include a fold line spaced laterally outwardly of said neck region.